



## **Bible Lens**

# Bible Lens—September 14–20, 2020

Subject: **Matter**

From the *Christian Science Sentinel* - September 14, 2020

**Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God.**

—[1 Corinthians 2:12](#)

## Exploring Bible Verses

An exploration of Bible citations from the *Christian Science Quarterly*® *Bible Lessons*

“... a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.”—Mary Baker Eddy

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### ***from the Golden Text***

#### **Psalms 84:2**

*My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.*

*Rānan*, the Hebrew word rendered *crieth out* here, describes shouting and singing joyfully. Another psalm has, “Let thy saints shout for joy [*rānan*]” ([132:9](#)).

“Courts of the Lord” likely alludes to the Temple complex, where two outer courts led to the inner sanctuary—the space set aside for Yahweh’s appearance. A commentary notes, “The anticipation is for the joy of worship and the protection of the divine presence.”

### ***from the Responsive Reading***

#### **Romans 7:12**

*The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

Students of Paul’s writings point to apparent inconsistency in his attitude toward the law. In some cases he condemns it. He tells the Roman Christians, for instance, “By the law is the knowledge of sin” and “The law worketh wrath” ([3:20](#); [4:15](#)). Yet he celebrates the law in many places, including this verse.

As one scholar explains, the apostle opposes exclusive or literal interpretation of Hebrew code rather than the law itself: “The Jew thought that if he kept the Law he would be saved. Paul taught that man must be saved in order to keep the Law.”

## **I Corinthians 3:18**

*Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.*

*World* is translated from the Greek term *aiōn*, meaning age or era. Those who were “wise in this world” included intellectuals, experts in Jewish law, and popular orators. Paul warns that prevailing opinion that is accepted as wisdom is made foolish by God (see [1:20](#), citation 4).

The Greek word *mōros*, translated *fool*, is considered a severe denunciation, implying not mere silliness but worthlessness of character. It is the source of the English word *moron*.

## ***from Section 1***

### **1 | II Corinthians 10:7**

*Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?*

Paul’s query recalls God’s guidance to Samuel in his search for a successor to King Saul: “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” ([I Samuel 16:7](#)). The apostle has already cautioned the Corinthian community, “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” ([II Corinthians 4:18](#)).

### **2 | Hebrews 11:3**

*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

#### **Translation**

*Faith convinces us that God created the world through his word. This means what can be seen was made by something that could not be seen.*

—GOD’S WORD Translation

[Verses 1–3](#) introduce what one source names “the roll call of the faithful”—an extensive list of Old Testament figures who modeled fidelity in the midst of overwhelming circumstances (see [vv. 4–38](#)). While Paul connects faith with righteousness (see [Romans 4:3–13](#)), the author of Hebrews presents faith in terms of endurance, hope, and trust in the unseen divine reality.

#### **Translation**

### **3 | I Corinthians 2:12, 13**

*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

...

*Now we have not received the spirit [that belongs to] the world, but the [Holy] Spirit Who is from God, [given to us] that we might realize and comprehend and appreciate the gifts [of divine favor and blessing so freely and lavishly] bestowed on us by God. And we are setting these truths forth in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the [Holy] Spirit, combining and interpreting spiritual truths with spiritual language [to those who possess the Holy Spirit].*

—Amplified® Bible Classic

## **from Section 2**

### **4 | I Corinthians 1:20**

*Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?*

At this time Paul has been preaching about Jesus' crucifixion. Many people—both Greeks and Jews—were scandalized by the idea of a crucified Messiah. To associate the most humiliating of punishments with God's chosen one was deemed foolish, even outrageous. Yet the cross is central to Christian teaching.

Paul's question addresses incensed reactions to this doctrine. To him, the importance of the crucifixion is indisputable: "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" ([v. 18](#)). The divine authority manifested by the crucified and resurrected Savior, understood and lived, isn't foolish but the essence of wisdom.

### **5 | Isaiah 33:22**

*The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.*

In the ancient Near East, kings generally controlled all functions of the government—what is often separated today into the judicial, legislative, and executive branches. To the Hebrew, Yahweh's divine rule is all-encompassing, as expressed in His covenant with Israel (see examples in [Exodus, chaps. 21–23](#)).

### **6 | Exodus 3:11, 12**

*Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee.*

[Exodus 3:2–4:17](#) is an example of a "call narrative"—a divine charge to someone God has chosen to carry out His work. Elements of the interchange include God making His presence known, an introduction, the assignment, an objection, divine reassurance, and a sign of God's power.

For Moses, the burning bush and God's communication begin the narrative. After the commission and Moses' objections, God provides several assurances—including the comforting words "I will be with thee." Finally, signs are given in the form of the snake and rod, as well as the cure of Moses' leprous hand.

Definitions from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*  
by Mary Baker Eddy

### **6 | 321:8**

*When, led by wisdom to cast down his rod, he saw it become a serpent, Moses fled before it; but wisdom bade him come back and handle the serpent, and then Moses' fear departed. In this incident was seen the actuality of Science. Matter was shown to be a belief only. The serpent, evil, under wisdom's bidding, was destroyed through understanding divine Science, and this proof was a staff upon which to lean. The illusion of Moses lost its power to alarm him, when he discovered that what he apparently saw was really but a phase of mortal belief.*

**bade:** directed; commanded

**phase:** period or stage of development

### **7 | 269:13–14**

*The categories of metaphysics rest on one basis, the divine Mind.*

**metaphysics:** the study of existence and reality; the science of mind or intelligence

### **8 | 268:6–11**

*Belief in a material basis, from which may be deduced all rationality, is slowly yielding to the idea of a metaphysical basis, looking away from matter to Mind as the cause of every effect. Materialistic hypotheses challenge metaphysics to meet in final combat.*

**deduced:** reasoned to understand something; drawn a logical conclusion

**rationality:** clear thinking; sound judgment

## **from Section 3**

### **8 | Romans 8:6**

*To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

#### **Translation**

### **8 | Romans 8:2, 6**

*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

. . .

*Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you free from the law that brings sin and death. . . . If people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, there is death. But if their thinking is controlled by the Spirit, there is life and peace.*

—New Century Version

To Paul, sin and death are not just closely associated but inseparable. A Bible authority points out: “Death is both the penalty of sin, thought of as transgression, and the final issue of sin, thought of as bondage. But for Paul the relation is even closer than either of these terms suggests. . . . To live in sin is not simply to face the sure doom of death; it is also to be dead in a real sense already.”

## **9 | Matthew 14:25–27**

*In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*

Christ Jesus’ appearance on the stormy sea is recorded in all the Gospels but Luke (see also [Mark 6:47–51](#); [John 6:16–21](#)). Each account includes the Master’s self-identification “It is I.” Only Matthew, however, tells of Peter’s attempt to walk on the water. And only Matthew records the disciples’ spontaneous confession “Of a truth thou art the Son of God” ([14:33](#)).

The “land of Gennesaret” ([v. 34](#)), the site of much of Jesus’ ministry, was a plain northwest of the Sea of Galilee near the town of Capernaum. *Lake of Gennesaret* was another name for the Sea of Galilee.

In ancient times, night was divided into four “watches,” beginning at sunset and ending at sunrise. “Fourth watch” means the last period of night, from 3 a.m. to dawn.

### Definitions from *Science and Health*

#### **10 | 182:32**

*The law of Christ, or Truth, makes all things possible to Spirit; but the so-called laws of matter would render Spirit of no avail, and demand obedience to materialistic codes, thus departing from the basis of one God, one lawmaker. To suppose that God constitutes laws of inharmony is a mistake; discords have no support from nature or divine law, however much is said to the contrary.*

**render:** cause to become

**avail:** help; benefit

## **from Section 4**

### **10 | I | Peter 4:12, 13**

*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings.*

#### **Translation**

*Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.*

—New Living Translation

Earlier in this letter, the writer compares “the trial of your faith” to the testing of gold by fire (see [1:7](#)). Believers recognized the “fiery” ordeal their Master had undergone. The persecution they now experience, explains a commentary, “is part of the redemptive suffering of Christ: to be reproached for following him is to share in the grace his suffering occasioned.”

**partakers:** people who share an experience

## 11 | [Romans 7:22](#)

*I delight in the law of God after the inward man.*

### Translation

*I love God's law with all my heart.*

—New Living Translation

References to the inner or inward man also appear in [II Corinthians 4:16](#) and [Ephesians 3:16](#). According to one source, “man’s interior being [means] his essential personhood, which when yielded to the powerful working of God’s Spirit can become thoroughly new.”

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 13 | [430:13–24](#)

*I here present to my readers an allegory illustrative of the law of divine Mind and of the supposed laws of matter and hygiene, an allegory in which the plea of Christian Science heals the sick.*

*Suppose a mental case to be on trial, as cases are tried in court. A man is charged with having committed liver-complaint. The patient feels ill, ruminates, and the trial commences. Personal Sense is the plaintiff. Mortal Man is the defendant. False Belief is the attorney for Personal Sense. Mortal Minds, Materia Medica, Anatomy, Physiology, Hypnotism, Envy, Greed and Ingratitude, constitute the jury.*

**allegory:** story used to communicate a message

**ruminates:** thinks about over and over

**plaintiff:** person who brings legal action against someone

## from Section 5

### Translation

## 12 | [Proverbs 2:6–8](#)

*The Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

...

*Only the Lord gives wisdom;*

*he gives knowledge and understanding.*

*He stores up wisdom for those who are honest.*

*Like a shield he protects the innocent.*

*He makes sure that justice is done,*

*and he protects those who are loyal to him.*

—New Century Version

### **13 | James 2:8**

*If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.*

#### **Translation**

*One law rules over all other laws. This royal law is found in the Scriptures: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” If you obey this law, then you are doing right.*

—International Children’s Bible

To many scholars, *royal law* means the law of God’s kingdom. This law of love for others, introduced in [Leviticus 19:18](#), is reinforced and deepened by Christ Jesus and the Apostle Paul (see [Matthew 22:37–40](#); [Romans 13:8](#); [Galatians 5:14](#)).

### **Definitions from *Science and Health***

#### **17 | 434:30–2**

*Your Honor, the lower court has sentenced Mortal Man to die, but God made Man immortal and amenable to Spirit only. Denying justice to the body, that court commended man’s immortal Spirit to heavenly mercy, — Spirit which is God Himself and Man’s only lawgiver!*

**amenable:** responsible; answerable

**commended:** entrusted the care of

#### **18 | 435:31**

*The only jurisdiction to which the prisoner can submit is that of Truth, Life, and Love. If they condemn him not, neither shall Judge Medicine condemn him; and I ask that the prisoner be restored to the liberty of which he has been unjustly deprived.*

**jurisdiction:** governing power

## 19 | 436:7–10

*Your Supreme Court must find the prisoner on the night of the alleged offence to have been acting within the limits of the divine law, and in obedience thereto. Upon this statute hangs all the law and testimony.*

**alleged:** claimed but not proven; supposed

## from Section 6

### Definitions from *Science and Health*

#### 21 | 437:32–4

*The attorney, Christian Science, then read from the supreme statute-book, the Bible, certain extracts on the Rights of Man, remarking that the Bible was better authority than Blackstone:—*

*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion.*

**Blackstone:** widely respected four-volume work on law by 18th-century English judge Sir William Blackstone

#### 22 | 440:33

*Here the counsel for the defence closed, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, with benign and imposing presence, comprehending and defining all law and evidence, explained from his statute-book, the Bible, that any so-called law, which undertakes to punish aught but sin, is null and void.*

**benign:** kindly; gracious

**imposing:** grand and impressive

**null and void:** having no force or effect

## from Section 7

### 15 | Isaiah 60:1

*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*

*Glory* is a significant term in both Hebrew and Greek scriptural texts. Here it is translated from the Hebrew word *kābôd*, encompassing honor, abundance, riches, and splendor. God’s people are to arise in response to His glory—and to shine as the rising sun.

Occurring multiple times in the Bible, the phrase “glory of the Lord” depicts the divine presence, movement, or appearance. Accompanying verbs such as *rise*, *fill*, *see*, and *appear* indicate the many ways God’s glory is manifested.

### 16 | Galatians 5:1

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

## Translation

### 16 | Galatians 5:1, 25

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. . . . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

• • •

*It was for this freedom that Christ set us free [completely liberating us]; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery [which you once removed]. . . . If we [claim to] live by the [Holy] Spirit, we must also walk by the Spirit [with personal integrity, godly character, and moral courage—our conduct empowered by the Holy Spirit].*

—Amplified® Bible

“Stand fast” is a common expectation in Paul’s letters (see also 1 Corinthians 16:13; Philippians 1:27; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:8). Remaining firm and constant safeguards the freedom and guarantees the fruitfulness of Christly life. “My beloved brethren,” the apostle counsels, “be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

To learn more about the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, go to <https://quarterly.christianscience.com>.

#### Resources quoted in this issue

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## Related healing ideas

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### Take it to the court of Spirit!

By Dorcas W. Strong

From the June 29, 1968, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Human law accords men the right of appeal. An unfavorable decision rendered in a lower court may be taken to a higher court, where a reversal of the decision may be sought. Divine law, contained in the Bible and explained in Christian Science, reveals mankind's moral right to appeal injustices of every kind to the court of Spirit. Here divine mercy annuls verdicts that threaten man's life, health, and usefulness.

Precedent for such appeals may be found throughout the Bible, especially in the healing ministry of Christ Jesus. Every phase of injustice imposed by medical beliefs or theological misconceptions yielded to the Master's understanding of the law of Love.

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, writes, "Ignorant of our God-given rights, we submit to unjust decrees, and the bias of education enforces this slavery" (p. 381). A little further on she states, "It is man's moral right to annul an unjust sentence, a sentence never inflicted by divine authority." Through an allegory found on pages 430 to 442 of *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy illustrates how an understanding of one's God-given rights corrects injustice and restores health.

This allegory depicts the trial of a case of illness in the way cases are tried in court. The defendant, Mortal Man, is tried first in the lower Court of Error, where the testimony before Judge Medicine, including that representing Health-laws, results in a sentence of death. Of this critical point, Mrs. Eddy writes, "Ah! but Christ, Truth, the spirit of Life and the friend of Mortal Man, can open wide those prison doors and set the captive free" (pp. 433–434).

The case is then appealed to the Supreme Court of Spirit, where Mortal Man is defended by Christian Science. Argument based on Scriptural evidence that man is subject to divine law alone annuls the sentence of death and sets Mortal Man free.

We can always take our case to the court of Spirit, where there is recourse to a law that supersedes medical opinion and fallible human judgment.

Our plea before this court is based on the realization that man is the spiritual image and likeness of God. He is not a mortal at the mercy of material laws or adverse circumstances. As the beloved child of God, he is under the jurisdiction of divine Truth and Love. Spiritual laws, the forces of good, sustain his existence and maintain his birthright of dominion over all the earth.

Every appeal to the court of Spirit is granted an immediate hearing. But patient persistence is required in refuting the arguments of material sense with true, spiritual facts until one's belief in the reality of evil is overcome.

Freedom from injustice of every kind will be realized in the experience of each one who humbly and trustingly takes his case to the court of Spirit. As he faithfully pleads his cause according to the divine statutes taught in Christian Science, the truth of Isaiah's promise will be attested: "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us" ([Isaiah 33:22](#)).

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit the print *Sentinel*, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/take-it-to-the-court-of-spirit](http://jsh.christianscience.com/take-it-to-the-court-of-spirit).

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